



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Transit Bus Accident Study – Phase II
Yield to Bus Campaign - Stakeholder Meetings
District 7

Date: October 20, 2005

Time: 2:00 PM

Location: 11201 N. Malcolm McKinley Drive
Tampa, Florida 33612

Attendees:

Ann Joslin	CUTR
Rob Grege	CUTR
Marian Scorza	FDOT
Katie Bryant	Pasco City Public Transportation
Amy Datz	FDOT-PTO
Fred Mead	Dovetail Consulting
Mignon Allen	Dovetail Consulting
Elba Lopez	FDOT

Annotated Agenda:

- Overview
 - 'Yield to Bus' campaign stems from FDOT analysis of transit route accidents on the state and federal highway system
 - Current focus is development of several safety related strategies and improvements
- Public Awareness Strategy
 - Inform motorists of the Florida law that requires drivers to yield to buses entering the travel lane from a bus bay
 - Use multiple communication channels: Radio, television, billboards and other signage; Driver education courses, license and tag renewals; Driver license test and driving improvement school
- Target Audience
 - General public driving within the State of Florida
 - Persons and organizations willing to be champions for safety and the support awareness/communications campaign
- Our Goal
 - To develop, seek funding for and implement an awareness campaign plan that will influence driver behavior and lead to increased bus transit safety
- Main Tasks
 - Gather input and support from the Offices of Public Transit, Safety and Public Information, and local transit agencies
 - Develop public awareness action plan/concept paper to enhance bus safety
 - Submit grant application to implement awareness campaign

- Schedule
 - Oct 2005 - Nov 2005 Gather stakeholder input and ideas
 - Feb 2006 Complete public awareness action plan
 - May 2006 Grant award notification
 - October 2006 Funding allocation and program initiation
- Vision...where do we want to go?
 - What safety "achievements" related specifically to bus transit safety/private automobile accidents would you like to see realized 5 years from now?
- Techniques...how will we get there?
 - Review list of public awareness techniques (see Appendix A)
 - How does each technique support the vision?
 - How it might be applied to promote public awareness of bus transit safety?
 - What are the strengths and limitations of each technique?
 - Select top five
- Open Discussion
- Adjourn

Meeting Summary:

1. Amy Datz began the discussion by explaining the impetus for the study was an analysis to determine if a design flaw in roadway system existed that was causing bus accidents. To answer the research question, FDOT engaged an engineering firm to look at five years of crash data and determined problem was not a design flaw but behavioral. As a result, FDOT is applying for a grant to develop a public awareness campaign.
2. Ms. Datz indicated that the team has or plans to meet with the following stakeholders
 - PIO -- conference call on November 10
 - Bartow
 - Tampa
 - FTPA conference in August
 - PIO conference in July
 - TCRP
 - NTSB to get LED light placed on back of bus: "Yield to Bus: It's the Law" or "Thanks for the Brake"
3. Mr. Grege suggested using caution before jumping to scenario for LED lights. He suggested the he cost associated with LED installation be further examined. He also mentioned a few additional concerns:
 - Resistance from bus drivers who do not wish to push any more buttons
 - Safety officer may be concerned with more flashing on road
 - "Words" on LED – drivers start reading and forget what they are doing, may lead to more accidents

Mr. Grege also asked what the current experience of transit agencies is with these types of accidents and what transit agencies are doing to address problem. Mr. Grege also sought more clarification on the priority/core message of the awareness campaign.

Ms. Lopez responded that Hartline has tried to address this issue in several different ways. She stated that the problem is right hand turns and merging with traffic. She recommended the study team inventory what the transit agencies have done to address problem as part of its efforts to develop the concept paper.

4. Mr. Grege stated the issue is institutional. JTA research indicated that Yield to Bus is the law, but only applicable on State Routes. Mr. Grege inquired if awareness messages are being delivered through public information and marketing, is a statewide campaign acceptable? He also asked if transit agencies can financially support campaign and if the information kits for the awareness campaign could be used by all agencies. Ms. Datz responded that the issues raised by Mr. Grege are the purpose for the series of meeting with each District and key stakeholder groups before writing the concept paper.
5. Ms. Lopez suggested using Transit Advisory Group as source of input. Other districts have Transit Advisory Group and Metropolitan Planning Organizations are also members of the advisory group.
6. The next meeting date of November 10 was announced. Ms. Datz is arranging the awareness campaign as an agenda item on the conference call.
7. Ms. Lopez expressed that transit agencies are often concerned about additional requirements from FDOT and the PSTA may be resistant to the changes that result from the awareness campaign; however, Ms. Lopez agrees that this is a good project.
8. Another member of the group stated that near-side bus stops are the biggest problem because the buses stop in the continuous right turn lanes. Fred Mead explained his experience with bus instruction and safety regarding right hand turns.
9. Mr. Grege stated, there is a design flaw/conflict between buses and pedestrians at intersections and traffic flow which requires the continuous lanes. Mr. Grege cautions buses pulling out on right turn lane. Assuming that grant is awarded, he recommends an Advisory Committee be formed during implementation of the campaign that is comprised of Marketing/PIO and Transit Operations. These groups may desire consultant support, but Mr. Grege strongly recommends that the FDOT stakeholder must decide and advise on the content and direction of the campaign.
10. Ms. Lopez offered to compile what has been done to address Yield to Bus for this District.
11. Marian Scorza asked how BRT would fit into this campaign. Ms. Datz responded BRT is only small fraction of current bus routes.
12. Ms. Lopez suggested FDOT be more proactive because agencies are moving toward BRT and ITS needs to make design allowances, e.g. Tampa BRT project has already been through PD & E.
13. Ms. Lopez acknowledged that they are now involving school buses... in this district there are a number of bus/fatal accidents involving children.

14. Ms. Datz stated that she will research who at Department of Education handles public info and would they be willing to partner, but will also be cautious not to be spread the focus of this program too thin.
15. Ms. Lopez suggested contacting the Florida State Highway Patrol.
16. Members of the group recommended the following priorities for the awareness campaign:
 - Billboards (meet with outdoor advertisers)
 - Libraries
 - Theme/Logo/ Brand Identity (most important, first step)
 - Public workshop/meetings and community walks (least important, do not work as well in this area)
 - Promotional Items (put on bag at grocery stores or print on receipt)
 - Displays/Exhibits

Members of the group also suggested that the awareness campaign be comprehensive and include as many techniques as possible to saturate the market.

17. Meeting adjourned at approximately 11:15 am.

APPENDIX A

PUBLIC INFORMATION & AWARENESS TECHNIQUES

The following is a list of techniques under consideration for the Yield to Bus Campaign:

- Information Kits (distributed at driver education courses, license and tag renewals; driver license test and driving improvement school)
- Advertisements (30 and 60 second)
- Informational Videos
- Video library/clippings of bus transit safety television news coverage
- Press releases
- Media Advisories
- Newspaper articles
- Press conferences
- Newsletters
- Reports
- Brochures
- Posters
- Audiovisual presentations
- Websites
- Special Events
- Displays and exhibits with pockets for informational materials placed in public gathering places (grocery stores, banks, churches, shops)
- Public Service Announcements (radio and television)
- Billboards
- Speakers Bureau/Public speaking engagements
- Citizen Advisory Group
- Programs at Schools for Parents
- Theme/Logo/Brand Identity for Campaign
- Community Walk (i.e. "Walk for Safety")
- Buttons, magnets, other promotional items
- Contests
- Public workshops/meetings/open houses